SPEECH OF GEN. BASILIO J. VALDES, CHIEF OF STAFF, PHILIPPINE ARMY
on Saturday, 6 October 1945.

My friends;

To me it is a distinct pleasure to be here with you today. The YMCA has played a creditable role in the life and progress of the Philippines and it is my earnest hope and expectation that it shall continue with undiminished fervour it great work toward the creation of able-bodied, mentally alert, and civic-spirited citizens.

At this critical moment of our history as a people it is well to consider the value of national discipline. The Japanese hordes which occupied our land for three long years had ruthlessly destroyed the moral fibre of our people. This utter annihilation of moral values is nowhere more eloquently apparent than in our poorer classes. These wretched men, women, children had endured untold privations and sacrifices in the hands of the Japanese and the fact of their survival is still one of the mysteries of the war that has just passed into history. Hunger-stricken and in dire poverty these poor men, naturally, had to discard time-honored virtues of honesty and decency for the preservation of life. And when the forces of liberation at long last came ashore on our beautiful islands these benighted citizens continued their reprehensible practice of indulging in petty thefts and robberies and other acts which they would never would have done before the Japanese Occupation.

An organization like the YMCA, known the world over for its active interest in the enlightenment of the masses, can go a long way toward encouraging respect for the law, obedience to sane principles, and the establishment of a truly disciplined citizenry. The YMCA should lead in this campaign for national discipline. Our salvation as a people depends, to a great extent, upon the orderly conduct of our youth today so that the Philippines of tomorrow could devote all its energy and talent to the development of a genuinely independent nation.

National discipline is imperatively essential if we must preserve these virtues that have ennobled our people through the centuries: kindness, hospitality, courage, and unerring honesty. Without order these cannot be peace. Without peace there can never be any progress. The most progressive and prosperous nations of history have gone through the painful metamorphosis from chaos to discipline and only thus have they been able to contribute to the material and cultural wealth of the world. Only thus have the citizens been imbued with the fundamental and personal responsibility that everyone should do his part in the tremendous task of nation-building, lest the whole structure fall to pieces and become a prey of more disciplined and aggressive powers.

The YMCA then should do its part in leading the way to sane, disciplined and alert citizenship. In the present campaign there should be a whole-hearted interest in the restoration of those traits that shall ultimately make of us

one nation indivisible, one people dedicated to its honorable place in the concert of free men. Let us help the YMCA with the needed funds to carry out this work.

I thank you.